

Task Force B Meeting Summary

Monday, April 17, 2006

Task Force Participants: Janet Cushman – MI Department of Human Services, Diane Golzynski – MI Department of Community Health, Barb Hensinger – MI Department of Agriculture, Sherri King – MI Department of Community Health, Jane Marshall (Chair) – Food Bank Council of Michigan, Barb Mutch – Michigan State University Extension, Karla Stratton – MI Department of Community Health, Todd Wickstrom – Heritage Foods, Jan Williams – MI Department of Human Services.

Additional Participants: Becky Henne – MSU Extension, Paul McConaughy – MSU Extension, Karen Martin – MSU Extension.

The sixth Task Force B: Improving Access to Fresh and Healthy Foods meeting convened on Monday, April 17, 2006 from 9:00 am – 11:00 in Constitution Hall in Lansing. Council Member Jane Marshall chaired the meeting.

Ms. Marshall called the meeting to order and initiated a brief round of introductions. She introduced Paul McConaughy, who coordinates the Michigan Nutrition Network (MNN) and the Michigan State Nutrition Action Plan (MISNAP). Mr. McConaughy and his colleagues, Becky Henne, Karen Martin and task force member Diane Golzynski, explained the nutrition education efforts underway in the state under MISNAP and MNN. MISNAP coordinates the work of many different nutrition education initiatives throughout the state, and brings representatives of these initiatives together on a quarterly basis to meet. Mr. McConaughy et al. explained the objectives, goals and accomplishments of MISNAP, and explained some of the funding mechanisms and opportunities available within the MNN. They explained that while MISNAP is a federally mandated partnership, it is not officially recognized or housed within a state agency, and recommended that the MFPC suggest official recognition by the state. They also highlighted the opportunity for the state to work to identify funds being spent in state agencies and departments that might be eligible for federal matching dollars via the MNN.

Task Force members discussed the policy recommendation options identified by Mr. McConaughy, Ms. Henne, Ms. Martin and Ms. Golzynski. MFPC staff will circulate a recommendation (B10) on the topics of nutrition education and MISNAP to Task Force members for feedback.

Recommendation B10: Incorporate nutrition education and promotion as a part of all food assistance programs

- a) The state should recognize the Michigan State Nutrition Action Plan (MISNAP) as the guiding document for nutrition education and promotion in Michigan, and

should officially designate the MISNAP Steering Committee as a standing committee of the MI Department of Human Services.

- b) The Michigan Departments of Human Services, Community Health, Education, and Agriculture should identify qualifying USDA cost share for nutrition education and promotion in food assistance programs, and collaborate with the MISNAP Steering Committee to utilize it statewide and within counties.

The task force then returned to the topic of emergency food services, raised in the March meeting. Recommendation B9 was developed in the March meeting, and the task force reviewed the recommendation, and raised additional questions about the recommendation. MFPC staff will pursue some of the questions raised, and will revise the recommendation accordingly and circulate the revised recommendation to task force members for feedback.

Recommendation B9: Increase Access to and Support for Emergency Food Resources and Needs.

- a) Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) should strengthen connections between Michigan agriculture and hungry residents by expanding the Michigan Agricultural Surplus System.
- b) Michigan Department of Human Services should meet the emergency food needs for Michigan residents by increasing grant funding channeled through the state food bank system.
- c) The state should optimize access to existing emergency food resources by working with the private and non-profit sectors to strengthen information and referral sources for those in need.

The next Task Force B meeting will focus on community and urban gardening, with future meetings on the topics of improving the healthy offerings of corner and convenience stores in urban/low-income areas, and the Afterschool Snack and Supper Program. The next meeting of Task Force B will be in June; exact time, date and location TBD.